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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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CHINESE COMMUNIST ACTIVITY ALONG TIBETAN-NEPALESE BORDER.

Comment: There appear to be two conflicting interpretations regarding Chinese Communist designs on Nepal. One interpretation, given by R. P. Upadhyaya, president of the Nepalese Congress Party, views the situation with alarm. The other, Brigadier Bantawa, head of the Nepalese Armed Police, sees no danger in reports that Chinese Communists are active in northwestern Nepal near the India-Nepal-Tibet border area.

The following information, taken from Hindu daily newspapers for the period 15 November - 30 December 1962, points out these views as expressed by two prominent Nepalese leaders who have been concerned over the so-called Chinese communist violation of the Nepalese frontier.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.

R. P. Upadhyaya, president of the Nepalese Congress Party, has indicated an alarmist viewpoint concerning Communist activities along the Tibetan-Nepalese border, according to a news dispatch in Aj, a Hindi daily newspaper of Bhopal.

The dispatch reported that Upadhyaya, during an interview by newsmen in Patna, Bihar, declared that according to reliable information, the Chinese Communists are penetrating Nepalese territory from the direction of Tibet in the vicinity of Sitapuli, a village in Baitani District near the Indo-Nepal-Tibet border in western Nepal. According to the dispatch, Upadhyaya added that the Chinese Communists have been concentrating in this area and in Taklakot in western Tibet since 1951, and that the troops have been entering Nepalese territory to cut down trees for the construction of barracks and other buildings. (1)

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Brigadier Bantawa, on the other hand, manifested less alarm regarding the frontier situation, according to reports of his statements to newsmen at Raxaul, Bihar, on 26 December which appeared in several issues of Naybharat Times, Bharat, and Vishwamitra for the period 27 - 30 December 1952.

Brigadier Bantawa was described as the leader of a five-man Nepalese "Peace Delegation" which left Katmandu on 8 October 1952 to investigate reports of Chinese Communist penetration of the western frontier regions of Nepal. (2) He was further identified as C. B. Bantawa, who is the head of the Nepalese Armed Police. He was quoted as having told reporters that his delegation was returning to Katmandu after having conducted a 75-day tour of the northwestern border because of the alleged expansion of Communist influence in that area and the violation of Nepalese territory by Chinese Communist troops in Taklakot and Garbyang. (3)

Bantawa declared that rumors about Chinese Communist penetration of Nepalese territory are completely false and that it is to the detriment of Sino-Nepalese friendship to permit the spread of such propaganda. He added that there are no more than 300 Chinese troops and that they are there to develop the area. (4)

Members of the delegation, in addition to Bantawa, were identified as Major Thapa, Maj Lila Ram Sharma, Lt Khadananda Sharma, and Lt Rudra Prasad. (2) [] listed the delegates in the same order as above, except that Major Thapa was written Maj H. B. Maya and Lt Rudra Prasad was further identified as Lt Rudra Prasad Upadhyaya. (7)

Maj Lila Ram Sharma, further identified as a ranking officer of the secret service of the Nepalese government, confirmed Brigadier Bantawa's comments. He stressed that local Tibetans are now receiving military instructions from Chinese Communist officers and that the people have entered Nepalese territory to cut down trees. He emphasized that they did not cross the frontier to perpetrate any crime or to incite disturbances, because the Tibetans have always been in the habit of crossing the Nepalese frontier to obtain their firewood or timber. (4)

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1. Banaras, A., 15 Nov 52
2. Delhi, Naybharat Times, 27 Dec 52
3. Bombay, Vishwamitra, 30 Dec 52
4. Allahabad, Bharat, 22 Dec 52

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